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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

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Session 10.03

How Family Background and Institutional Environment Affect Career Aspirations of College Women

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A familiar character in the American dream is the successful man, often rising from an obscure background to a position of power and wealth. For many years, educators and other social scientists have tried to explain this phenomenon called success by accounting for the effects of family background, schooling, and individual ability; most of these studies have been limited to samples of men. Career development for women is complicated and difficult to predict; it is often a long, drawn-out process. Women face a large number of options and conflict in the choice of career and home patterns as they try to make decisions congruent with their self-concept and personal orientations (Ginzberg, Astin, in Astin, Suniewick, Dwek, 1971). Traditionally, women have chosen different occupations than men -- occupations such as teacher, health professional, secretary. Survey data show, however, that this pattern is changing. College freshmen women in 1976 were more likely to choose careers traditionally dominated by men than were college freshmen women ten years earlier in 1966. For example, the percent of women choosing business rose from 3 percent in 1966 to 10 percent in 1976; the percent choosing engineer rose from 0.3 to 2 percent; the percent choosing doctor and lawyer each rose by 3 percentage points from 2 to 5, and 1 to 4 percent respectively. (Astin, et al., National Norms for 1966 and 1976).

So, with these data in mind, it seems fitting that researchers are now trying to explain for women the phenomenon of occupational status, or success in America.

Two studies of successful women stand out in my mind: An early study in this area was Helen Astin's report on the woman doctorate in America;

more recently there is Hennig and Jardin's study of the managerial woman. Both of these studies are based on samples of women who succeeded 20 to 30 years ago, and the patterns which emerge from these two studies are remarkably similar. The backgrounds of the women include educated parents employed in professional and business or managerial occupations. The families are small, of relatively high socioeconomic status, and often include no sons. The parents encourage their daughters' high aspirations. The women themselves are characterized by superior intellectual ability, strong drive, and commitment to their work. They choose their careers late, while in their middle 30s, during a period of personal reassessment. Many choose not to marry: in Astin's study 45 percent of the women never married, and among those who did marry, over 25 percent never had children. In the Hennig and Jardin study, none of the women married until she was at least 35 years old, and although half of the small sample of 25 did eventually marry, none had children of her own. Other studies have shown marriage plans to be the strongest predictor of women's career plans (Bayer; Astin, Cook in Astin, Suniewick, Dwek, 1971). For the woman doctorate Astin reports one effect of the college environment—quality of the doctoral institution is positively related to productivity, over and above the woman's own interests and aptitudes in research and writing.

Objectives of Study

I was interested in looking at these questions of career choice for a younger cohort of women. I chose a sample of women who were in college between 1966 and 1971. In particular, I wanted to answer the following questions:

- When do changes in aspirations occur during the college years? During the first year? After the first year, but before graduation? Within the first year after graduation from college?
- What are the backgrounds and individual attitudes and behaviors of women who raise and lower their aspirations during college? What characteristics distinguish those women who maintain high career aspirations during the four years of college?
- What are the effects of the college environment on women's career aspirations?

Although there is a voluminous literature on the impact of college on students, only a few studies have been based on longitudinal data from national samples; most studies have been limited to one point in time, to a single campus or even a subset of students at a single campus—often all men. Recently, Alexander Astin has completed a comprehensive study of the impact of college on a variety of student outcomes including vocational development as well as personal, social, and academic development (Astin, 1977). My study uses the same data base as Astin's study, but looks specifically at high career aspirations of women.

Data Source

The original data base was a sample of 25,286 college students who were first surveyed in 1966 when they were freshmen and were subsequently re-surveyed in 1970 at the end of their college years. I merged onto this file additional data for the same students from surveys in 1967, when the students were sophomores, and 1971, when they were graduated for one year. Merging the data from the three followups together and adding additional information on the institutions from NCES files reduced the sample size to about 10,000. Further, I restricted the sample to traditional students; that is, students who were white, native-born, and less than 22 years old when they first matriculated as freshmen in 1966. These restrictions reduced the sample by 10 percent. I also restricted the sample to students who attended only one college and who graduated in 1970. This restriction reduced the sample by another 40 percent and eliminated all 2-year institutions. The final sample contains 5,072 cases in 149 colleges; of these, 2,430 are women.

The choice of the cohort and the restrictions of the sample pose two major threats to the validity of this study. First, the confounding historical climate threatens the generalizability of the results to students in other years. My sample of students were in college between 1966 and 1971 when they, and the rest of America, were confronted with the Viet Nam War and the Women's Movement. These two events could moderate the effects of institutional climate on students' career plans if the War

and the Movement caused students in some institutions (San Francisco State, for example), to change their career plans, but these events did not affect the career choices of students in other colleges (Gettysburg, for example).

Second, what population, if any, does the final sample respresent? They are native American whites, who entered college before they were 22, who stayed at the same college for four years, and who responded to four different questionnaires in five years between 1966 and 1971. This is a very restricted population; further research is needed on the populations of students which I have excluded.

Methodology

First, crosstabulations show how women's and men's aspirations change over the college years; the data have been weighted to estimate the national population of college freshmen in 1966. Second, regression analyses identify the characteristics related to high aspirations at each point in time; controlling for career aspirations at previous points allows measurements of the characteristics related to changes in aspirations across the college years. Both family background and college environment effects are identified. Finally, partial correlations compare high career aspirations with other student outcomes such as grades, attitudes, beliefs, and choices for particular careers.

Results

Overview and changes in career choice from freshman year to five years later

Table 1 shows the percent of women and men in my sample expressing high career aspirations at four points in time from 1966, when they were freshmen, to 1971, five years later. The table also shows the percentages of students who maintained consistently high career plans across the five years.

High Career Plans is defined throughout this study as a dichotomous variable; a person was coded 1 if she expressed degree plans of LLB or JD; PhD or EdD; MD, DDS, or DVM; or if she expressed career plans of Minister-Priest; Lawyer; Researcher; College Teacher; or Doctor. Otherwise, the person was coded 0 on this outcome.

Consistently, a smaller percentage of women, about one-third as

TABLE 1

Weighted Percent of Women and Men with High Career Aspirations
Traditional Students who Entered College in 1966 and Graduated in 1970[1]

Percent with High Career Plans in[2]	Women (Weighted N = 76,898)[4]	Men (Weighted N = 105,950)
1966 -- Freshmen	12.8	39.5
1967 -- Sophomore	11.0	40.0
1970 -- Graduate	15.8	40.8
1971 -- Graduate one year	13.8	39.5
1966 and 1967	7.0	30.6
1967 and 1970	6.9	28.0
1970 and 1971	8.2	25.7
1966, 1967, and 1970	4.9	22.6
1967, 1970, and 1971	3.9	19.6
1966, 1967, 1970, and 1971	2.8	16.0

Weighted Percent of Women and Men with High Career Aspirations
National Norms of Freshmen Entering Four-year Colleges and Universities

Percent with High Degree Plans in[3]	Women	Men
1966	8.7	28.5
1967	9.8	30.4
1970	11.8	31.5
1971	12.5	32.2
1976	21.8	33.5

[1] Sample includes Native American Whites, who entered college in 1966 before they were 22, who stayed at the same college for four years, and who responded to four different questionnaires in five years between 1966 and 1971 (N = 2430 for women and 2642 for men).

[2] High Career Plans includes degree plans of LLB or JD; PhD or EdD; MD, DDS, DVM; or career plans of Minister-Priest, Lawyer, Researcher, College Teacher, or Doctor.

[3] High Degree Plans includes PhD or EdD; MD, DDS, DVM; LLB or JD; BD.

[4] Data were weighted to approximate the national population of college freshmen in 1966.

many as men, chose high career plans at each point between 1966 and 1971; the absolute difference between the women and the men remained the same throughout the five years, with a slight relative gain for the women. For both women and men, there was a tendency for aspirations to rise slightly during the college years, then to fall back during the year following graduation (perhaps as students chose jobs or failed to be accepted to graduate school). There is no time when plans appear to crystallize. The relative stability of High Career Plans across time is nearly constant for women and for men. The degree of stability in High Career Plans, however, is considerably lower for women than for men. Across two periods in time, the average stability of choosing High Career Plans is 56 percent for women and 71 percent for men; across three points in time, it is 32 percent for women and 53 percent for men. Across the four time points, the percent of those with initially High Career Plans who maintained these high aspirations for five years is 22 percent for the women and 41 percent for the men.

I looked at these results separately for women and men with specific career plans in 1966. Among the women with initially High Career Plans in 1966, those who planned to get a PhD in the Humanities and Social Sciences were the least consistent over time; only 11 percent of them maintained their High Career Plans all the way through. By comparison, 27 percent of the Science PhD aspirants maintained their High Career Plans for five years. In addition, 34 percent of those women who initially planned to be lawyers in 1966, and 47 percent of those who planned to be doctors, also maintained their High Career Plans across the five years. For men, 25 percent of the Humanities and Social Science PhD aspirants, 41 percent of those planning to be lawyers, and 54 percent of those planning to be doctors maintained their High Career Plans all the way through.

Data on different cohorts of college students entering college between 1966 and 1976 provide some information on whether changes in aspirations of women and men in my sample were due to the measured effects of family background, personality, and college environment or whether they were due to the confounding effects of the historical climate.

The national norms show that major shifts in women's career plans did occur between 1966 and 1976. The percent of women with High Career Plans increased from 9 to 13 percent in the five years from 1966 to 1971, and from 13 to 22 percent in the five years from 1971 to 1976, for an overall increase of 150 percent in the ten years from 1966 to 1976. Over the same ten-year period, the shift for men in High Career Plans was an 18 percent increase from 29 percent in 1966 to 34 percent in 1976. These figures indicate that whereas in 1966, less than one-third as many women as men chose High Career Plans, by 1976 almost two-thirds as many women as men were choosing High Career Plans.

Effects of background, individual characteristics and college environment on career plans

Tables 2 and 3 provide the results of the regression analyses for all women in the sample of traditional students in four-year colleges. In Table 2, the dependent variable is High Career Plans in 1966 when the women were Freshmen; in Table 3, the dependent variable is High Career Plans in 1970, when the women were graduating.

Factors associated with High Career Plans in 1966

Table 2 shows that the background variables significantly associated with initially High Career Plans of Freshmen women in 1966 are relatively few: the strongest effect is scores on national aptitude tests (measured on the scale of the National Merit Scholarship Test). Other significant variables are honors in high school, a science award in high school and use of the library in high school (perhaps a proxy for good study habits).

In a similar regression analysis for men, more background characteristics are associated with initially High Career Plans in 1966; positive effects for men include not only national scholarship exam scores, a science award in high school, and use of the library in high school—also significant for women—but also, high grades in high school, parents' income, father's occupational status, a Jewish home, and a non-farm home.

For women, several individual attitudes and behaviors are significantly associated with High Career Plans in 1966, independent of family background and high school activities. The most significant is the negative association

TABLE 2

Family Background, College Environment, and Individual Characteristics Associated with High Career Plans of Freshmen Women in 1966
Traditional Students Who Entered College in 1966 and Graduated in 1970[1]

	Correlation with[2] High Career Plans as Freshmen in 1966	Beta and Partial Correlatoin with High Career Plans as Freshmen in 1966	
		Beta[3]	F
Family Background			
Father's Occupation	0.048	0.021	------
Parent's Income	0.010	-0.011	------
Reared Catholic (0,1)	0.024	0.023	------
Reared Jewish (0,1)	0.030	0.014	------
Reared in South (0,1)	-0.037	-0.021	------
Reared on Farm (0,1)	-0.048	-0.027	------
National Merit Scores	0.232	0.160	40.676
High School Grades	0.172	0.048	------
High School Honors (0,1)	0.181	0.057	5.030
High School Science Award (0,1)	0.100	0.076	14.589
High School--Used Library (0,1)	0.068	0.067	11.528
		Partial Correlation	
Individual Characteristics in 1966			
Likelihood of Marrying			
One-year after college	-0.138	-0.137	
While in college	-0.135	0.100	
Status Interests-authority, recognition	0.131	0.133	
Intellectual self-esteem	0.248	0.127	
Artistic Interests-literature, ar	0.082	0.051	
Altruistic Interests-helping others	0.05	0.049	
Present religion--None	0.066	0.045	
Present politics--Liberal	0.058	0.041	
College Environment			
High Self-Esteem students in high selective institutions (0,1)	0.173	0.093	
High S-E in high prestigious	0.167	0.090	
High Ach in high prestigious	0.143	0.045	
Percent of college's B.A.s in student's major field	-0.051	-0.076	
Prestige	0.169	0.069	
Selectivity	0.180	0.066	
Liberal	0.118	0.069	
Selective, Coed, Non-sectarian	0.114	0.060	
Uncertainty about career plans	0.069	0.045	

[1] See Table 1, footnote 1.

[2] See Table 1, footnote 2.

[3] Standardized regression coefficients in equation with Family Background predicting High Career Plans in 1966. $R^2 = 0.072$.

TABLE 3

Family Background, College Environment, and Individual Characteristics Associated with High Career Plans of Women College Graduates in 1970 Traditional Students who Entered College in 1966[1]

	Correlation with High Career Plans[2] at Graduation in 1970	Beta and Partial Correlation with High Career Plans at Graduation in 1970	
		Beta[3]	F
Family Background			
Father's Occupation	0.068	0.004	------
Parent's Income	0.036	0.008	------
Reared Catholic (0,1)	0.045	0.051	6.987
Reared Jewish (0,1)	0.088	0.062	10.873
Reared in South (0,1)	-0.016	0.042	5.034
Reared on Farm (0,1)	-0.033	0.020	------
National Merit Scores	0.250	0.045	------
High School Grades	0.189	0.010	------
High School Honors (0,1)	0.198	0.028	------
High School Science Award (0,1)	0.073	0.013	------
High School--Used library (0,1)	0.071	0.032	------
Individual Characteristics in 1966			
Religion now -- None in 1966	0.115	0.046	6.297
Politics -- Liberal in 1966	0.103	0.038	4.268
Artistic Interests in 1966	0.107	0.014	------
Business Interests in 1966	-0.050	-0.007	------
Status Interests in 1966	0.086	0.021	------
Altruism Interests in 1966	0.054	0.019	------
Stubbornness in 1966	0.073	0.005	------
Interpersonal Self-Esteem in 1966	0.047	0.009	------
Intellectual Self-Esteem in 1966	0.204	0.021	------
Likelihood of Marrying (in 1966)			
While in college	-0.065	0.031	------
Within one-year after college	-0.087	-0.043	5.326
Career Plans in 1966, 1967			
High Career Plans in 1966	0.355	0.176	57.953
High Career Plans in 1967	0.392	0.199	49.998
Health (non-MD) Plans in 1966	-0.111	-0.021	------
Teacher Plans in 1967	-0.172	-0.059	7.406
Science PhD Plans in 1967	0.147	-0.079	13.490
Doctor Plans in 1966	0.135	-0.052	6.652
Degree Plans in 1967	0.355	0.102	18.917
Career Plans in 1967	0.171	0.060	7.861
GPA in 1967	0.172	0.061	8.238

Table 3 Continued

Family Background, College Environment, and Individual Characteristics Associated with High Career Plans of Women College Graduates in 1970 Traditional Students who Entered College in 1966

	Correlation with High Career Plans at Graduation in 1970	Beta and Partial Correlation with High Career Plans at Graduation in 1970	
		Beta[3]	F
College Environment			
High Ach Students in High Selective women's colleges	0.124	0.076	16.783
High Selective Women's Colleges	0.123		
Pct Faculty Women	0.055		
Uncertainty about career plans	0.105	0.045	5.856
		Partial Correlation	F for entry[4]
Individual Characteristics in 1970, 1971			
Status Interests in 1970	0.212	0.180	80.239
Married by 1971	-0.162	-0.141	48.697
Married in 1970	-0.111	-0.108	28.396
Children by 1971	-0.092	-0.068	11.011
Involved in research project	0.222	0.119	34.124
Involved in honors program	0.199	0.072	12.576
Intellectual Self-Esteem, 1970	0.221	0.058	7.958
Cumulative GPA in 1970	0.174	0.043	4.415
Overall Satisfaction with college	0.042	0.055	7.383
Liberal politics in 1970	0.17[illegible]	0.052	6.415
Altruistic Interests in 1970	0.053	0.054	6.935
Business Interests in 1970	-0.070	-0.042	4.203

[1] Sample includes Native American Whites, who entered college in 1966 before they were 22, who stayed at the same college for four years, and who responded to four different questionnaires in five years between 1966 and 1971 (N = 2430 for women and 2642 for men).

[2] High Career Plans includes degree plans of LLB or JD; PhD or EdD; MD, DDS, DVM; or career plans of Minister-Priest, Lawyer, Researcher, College Teacher, or Doctor.

[3] Standardized regression coefficients in equation with Family Background, Individual Characteristics in 1966, Career Plans in 1966 and 1967, and College Environment predicting High Career Plans in 1970. $R^2 = 0.255$.

[4] F value for Beta if variable were entered on next step of stepwise regression analysis.

with saying that marriage is highly likely within the next five years. Also significant and positively related to High Career Plans in 1966, are Intellectual Self-Esteem (self-ratings on intellectual self-confidence, academic ability, and mathematical ability); Status Interests (self-ratings on importance of becoming an authority and obtaining recognition from colleagues for contributions in major field); Artistic Interests (ratings on importance of writing or creating original works such as poems, novels, painting, sculpture, decorating); Altruistic Interests (ratings on importance of helping others who are in difficulty, participating in an organization like the Peace Corps or VISTA). Finally, saying present religious affiliation is none and saying politics are liberal are significantly associated with expressing High Career Plans in 1966.

Among the college environment variables I included several interaction terms between student characteristics and college characteristics. Table 2 shows that women with High Career Plans in 1966, even when family background and individual characteristics are controlled, tended to be students with high self-esteem and high ability in highly selective and/or highly prestigious institutions. Women with High Career Plans chose to attend selective, non-sectarian, co-educational institutions. Further, they tended to choose majors in fields where a small percentage of the BAs graduate. Women with High Career Plans in 1966 attended colleges rated as liberal by the students, and ones where a relatively large percentage of the freshmen express uncertainty about their career plans.

Astin (1977) reports additional correlates with high educational aspirations and high self-esteem. He finds, for example, that students with high educational aspirations at college entry are more likely to participate in honors programs, to achieve in academic and extracurricular activities, and to graduate. They are also more likely to become involved in student government, to participate in demonstrations, and to increase their support for student autonomy. Students with high <u>interpersonal</u> self-esteem are more likely to increase their educational aspirations and to become involved on an interpersonal level with other students and faculty

after entering college. Students with high intellectual self-esteem are likely to become involved in honors programs and get high grades, but they are somewhat less likely than students with low intellectual self-esteem to become involved academically, that is, to study long hours or devote considerable energy to academic pursuits.

Factors associated with High Career Plans in 1970

Effects of background and individual characteristics

Table 3 summarizes the effects of background, individual characteristics, and college environment on High Career Plans in 1970 when the women were graduating from college.

When all variables are included in the final regression equation, only three background variables remain significantly related to High Career Plans in 1970 for women: positive effects for being reared in the Jewish or Catholic religion; and negative effects for being reared in the South.

The individual characteristics associated with High Career Plans in 1970, independent of all other factors, are: indicating in 1966 that present religious affiliation is none, politics are liberal, and the chances of marriage in the next five years are not very high. (Remember that these characteristics are also associated with High Career Plans in 1966. In this analysis, however, they remain significant predictors of High Career Plans in 1970 even after plans at all previous time points are controlled.)

As we might expect, the variables most strongly related to High Career Plans in 1970 are High Career Plans in the two previous surveys in 1966 and 1967. In fact, High Career Plans in 1966 and High Career Plans in 1967 explain over 18 percent of the variance in High Career Plans in 1970. Degree plans coded continuously as years of education and career plans coded continuously on the Duncan-Reiss scale are also significant. The effects for the various occupational career groups are significant but difficult to interpret when the continuous variables and the dummy variables for degree plans and career plans are also included in the equation.

I also ran the regression analyses separately for two groups of women and men: one group is students with High Career Plans in 1966—degree plans of LLB or JD; PhD or EdD; MD, DDS, DVM; or career plans of Minister-Priest, Lawyer, Researcher, College Teacher, or Doctor; the other group is students with degree plans of BA or MA and career plans of Farmer, Businessman, Teacher, non-MD Health Professional, and other.

The women with High Career Plans in 1966 were likely to maintain their High Career Plans at the end of their college years when they graduated in 1970 if they did well on the national scholarship exams (a continuing influence even after initial plans are controlled), came from high-income homes, and were reared in the Jewish religion. Women with initial aspirations for the BA or MA were likely to raise their aspirations to High Career Plans by the time they graduated in 1970 if they scored high on the national scholarship exams, came from high-income homes, and received honors in high school.

Comparison analyses for the men in the sample show men are likely to maintain their initially High Career Plans if they had high grades in high school, did not grow up on a farm, and anticipated a professional career in medicine or law rather than a PhD. Men with initially modest aspirations are likely to raise their aspirations to High Career Plans if they had high grades in high school, high scores on the national scholarship exams, and were reared in a Jewish home.

Thus, we can identify four background variables which are positively associated with High Career Plans for women and men across the college years: ability (as measured by the National Merit scores); high school grades or honors; and socioeconomic status (parents' income for women and non-farm for men); and a Jewish home.

Effects of college environment

For the total sample of women in my study, only two college environment variables are associated with High Career Plans in 1970 when family background, individual attitudes and behaviors, and previous career plans are statistically controlled. First, there is a positive effect for women's colleges, where

a high percent of the faculty are women. Women's colleges are particularly effective for high ability women in selective colleges. Second, there is a positive effect for colleges where students are uncertain about their career plans as freshmen.

I also analyzed the institutional effects on High Career Plans in 1970 for the four subgroups of women and men with and without High Career Plans in 1966.

Women with initially High Career Plans in 1966 were not significantly affected by the institutional climate while in college, although one year after graduation in 1971, women with high ability who attended selective women's colleges were more likely to be pursuing their High Career Plans. On the other hand, women with initial aspirations for a BA or MA were likely to raise their aspirations to High Career Plans in 1970 if they went to selective women's colleges (where the percent of women faculty is high).

For men, the results are somewhat different. Men with initially High Career Plans in 1966 were negatively affected by attending military academies, large institutuions, and those where a small percent of the faculty are men. They were positively affected (maintained their High Career Plans) in institutions where there is an academic orientation and where the students feel the faculty are concerned about them. Men with initial aspirations for a BA or MA were likely to raise their aspirations to High Career Plans in 1970 if they went to selective institutions where students use the library, or to small, academic, social institutions where students feel the faculty are concerned.

Astin reports uniformly positive effects for women's and men's colleges. Both women and men in these colleges become more academically involved, interact with faculty frequently, show large increases in intellectual self-esteem, and are more satisfied with practically all aspects of the college experience (the sole exception is social life) compared with their counterparts in coeducational institutions.

Astin finds a number of unique effects for women's colleges. First, they facilitate high degree plans and high career aspirations among their

women students (as already noted in the results of my analyses). Second, they facilitate positions of leadership, involvement in student government, and baccalaureate graduation. Finally, they facilitate artistic interests and political liberalism (both associated with High Career Plans for women in my study).

In an analysis of specific career plans, Astin finds that women who attend women's colleges are more likely to implement career plans in nursing or business. Men's colleges, on the other hand, substantially increase the likelihood that men will carry out career plans in law, business, and college teaching; they also have a substantial positive effect on starting salaries in business.

Thus, we can identify four college environment factors which are positively associated with High Career Plans for women and men over the college years: women's colleges and men's colleges, especially selective women's colleges for women with high ability; same-sex faculty role models; an academic orientation including honors programs, research projects, and use of the library; and a small, cohesive atmosphere where the students feel the faculty know them individually and are concerned about them.

Individual characteristics in 1970 correlated with High Career Plans in 1970

Finally, the partial correlations tell us what are some of the other characteristics of women who expressed unusually High Career Plans as they graduated from college in 1970. These women were married and did not have children. In college, they were involved in research and/or honors programs. They had high intellectual self-esteem, and they had earned high cumulative Grade-Point Averages during their college years. Overall, they were satisfied with their college experience. They indicated their politics were more liberal in 1970 than in 1966. They also expressed increased interests in helping people and decreased interests in business. The most highly correlated attitude is increased status interests—rating important becoming an authority and obtaining recognition from colleagues for contributions in the major field.

Conclusions

This study leads to some tentative conclusions and policy recommendations. First, there has been a ten-year trend toward higher career aspirations for college women. In the late 1960s, only one-third as many freshmen women as men were expressing High Career Plans for an advanced degree in professional careers. By 1976 the absolute percentage of women expressing High Career Plans had risen by 150 percent; relative to men, almost two-thirds as many women as men were choosing High Career Plans.

Second, women appear to be much less stable than men in expressing High Career Plans across the college years. Perhaps this finding can be explained in part by the complexity of women's career choices; many women do not choose High Career Plans until their mid-30s when they have resolved the career and home conflicts.

Third, for both women and men four background factors continue to be associated with High Career Plans during the college years, even when previous aspirations are statistically controlled. These significant background effects are ability, high school grades or honors, socioeconomic status, and a Jewish home.

Fourth, the institutional factors associated with High Career Plans are different for women than for men. The only institutional effect for women is selective women's colleges (where the percent of faculty who are women is high). Men are positively affected by small size, men faculty, academic orientation, a feeling that the faculty are concerned about them.

What can be done? We can encourage women, especially high-ability women, to attend selective women's colleges. In coeducational colleges, we can provide a higher percentage of women faculty. We can also provide peer groups of women students which appear to stimulate leadership ability and high aspirations. We can provide small colleges within large universities. We can encourage faculty-student interaction, concern of the faculty for the students. We can encourage students to be involved in the academic life--honors programs, research activities, use of the library. Finally, we can encourage women to have High Career Plans and high self-esteem, and above all, to delay marriage plans.

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